REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Le for the helpful and courteous discussion with Applicants' Representative on August 23, 2006. During this discussion it was noted that Mumcu (U.S. 4,687,837) does not disclose or suggest that at least 75% by weight of spherical particles in which all three spatial axes x, y and z of the individual particles have the same dimension to within ±10%. In addition, it was pointed to the superior results in Table 1 at page 10 of the specification. The Examiner appeared favorably convinced by the arguments.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application, as amended, in view of the following remarks.

The present invention as set forth in **Claim 1** relates to a polyamide powder, comprising polyamide particles having

a median grain size d 50 of from 20 to 90 μm,

a content of fines < 5 μm of below 1% by weight, and

at least 75% by weight of spherical particles in which all three spatial axes x, y and z of the individual particles have the same dimension to within ±10%.

In contrast, Mumcu (U.S. 4,687,837), Suzuki and Araki et al (US 6,777,488) fail to disclose or suggest a polyamide powder as claimed with polyamide particles having a d50 of from 20 to 90 μm, a content of fines < 5 μm of below 1% by weight, and at least 75% by weight of spherical particles in which all three spatial axes x, y and z of the individual particles have the same dimension to within ±10%.

Mumcu (U.S. 4,687,837) does not disclose or suggest that at least 75% by weight of spherical particles in which all three spatial axes x, y and z of the individual particles have the same dimension to within ±10%. All that Mumcu discloses at col. 3, first line is that there are particles that assume spherical shapes. However, just because there is a spherical shape,

does not mean that the particles have a dimension within a narrow range of distribution as claimed (±10%). Thus, Mumcu does not anticipate the present invention.

All that Suzuki discloses in Example 2 (referred to by the Examiner) is a 200-mesh pass powder. No other specifications of the powder are given.

Further the claimed powder of the present invention exhibits superior properties which are not disclosed or suggested by Suzuki. The powder of the invention from example 1 were used for coating metal pipes. For comparison, a number of commercially available polyamide powders (Degussa AG) were used. These are VESTOSINT 1111 black, VESTOSINT 1174 white, and VESTOSINT 2157 black. The results are given in Table 1 below which is copied from page 10 of the specification.

Table 1

Coating trials

Product	d 50	< 5%	Proportion of spherical particles	Pipe layer thickness achieved	Max. radial layer thickness difference	Dusting	Fluidization
	[µm]	[%]	[%]	[µm]	[µm]	[sec]	[grade]
Polyamide powder A	52	0.1	84	120	<5	<5	1-2
VESTOSINT 2157	57	0.5	~70	120	10	10	3
VESTOSINT 1111	100	0.1	~65	200	<5	<5	1
VESTOSINT 1174	40	8	~70	130	20	>15	5

The data in the Table are discussed in the specification at pages 10 and 11 as follows:

> The polyamide powder of the invention gave a very homogeneous coating on the metal pipe, the quality of the coating reaching that of a traditional fluidized-bed-coating powder. In terms of dusting and fluidization, the powder exhibits comparably good processing properties. The polyamide powder of the invention can achieve desired layer thicknesses below 200µm. Satisfactory layer thicknesses of 120µm could be achieved in the trial reproducibly, without defects.
>
> In contrast, the only layer thicknesses which could be achieved in comparable quality using commercially available fluidized-bed-coating powders were 200µm and above.

Conventional, commercially available minicoating powders and conventional, commercially available fine powders exhibit markedly poorer fluidization properties in comparison, and more dusting at the fluidizing pan.

Although coherent layers of from 120 to 130 μm could be achieved on the test system, these exhibit markedly greater coating inhomogeneity, attributed mainly to the poorer fluidizing behavior.

The above superior properties are not disclosed or suggested by Mumcu, Suzuki or Araki et al.

Each of Suzuki or Araki et al do not cure the defects of Mumcu.

Therefore, the rejection of Claims 1-5, 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Mumcu, and the rejection of Claims 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Mumcu in view of Suzuki or Araki et al are believed to be unsustainable as the present invention is neither anticipated nor obvious and withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

This application presents allowable subject matter, and the Examiner is kindly requested to pass it to issue. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the claims or otherwise wish to discuss this case, he is kindly invited to contact Applicants' below-signed representative, who would be happy to provide any assistance deemed necessary in speeding this application to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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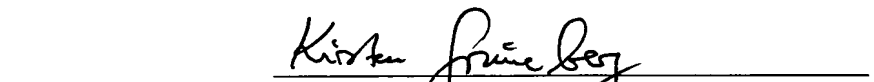

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